

TOWN OF SIMSBURY - BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING - BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
MARCH 1, 2012

CALL TO ORDER

The Special Budget Workshop Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were: First Selectman Mary Glassman; Board members John Hampton, Lisa Heavner, Sean Askham and Nancy Haase. Absent was Moira Wertheimer. Others in attendance included Chief Ingvertsen, Carolyn Keily, Colleen O'Connor, Marianne Harris and other interested parties.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

There was no one for public audience.

DISCUSS

Public Safety - Chief Ingvertsen spoke about continuing the present course of policing and maintaining the current level of staffing in the Police Department. He made a few adjustments in their budget to come within the budget guidelines. This is a no frills budget, just like last year.

He said the gas budget is based on \$3.54 per gallon of gas or \$100,000. It is now cut back to \$85,000 as they burn up about 29,000 gallons each year.

Chief Ingvertsen said there are some increases in contractual spending and Public Agency support. There is an increase in C-Med of \$108 for the direction of ambulances in case of an emergency. The Life Scan, for fingerprinting, is no longer paid by the State.

Chief Ingvertsen said they do try to buy equipment through the drug asset forfeiture fund instead of coming through the budget. This budget also included Animal Control. He said they had also asked for four new cruisers, but cut it back to three. He would appreciate it if the \$4,465 could possibly be put back into the budget, but they will deal with what they get. He said they also cut back on the overtime, even though it is used sparingly.

The Board congratulated the Department in doing a great job, especially with the two disasters last year. This is a great conservative budget.

Ms. Glassman said the Board would have him back again to discuss the emergency response update and the dispatch study. They will also discuss the “Cops More” grant.

Chief Ingvertsen said about 2009/10 they applied through the Police Commission to the Board of Selectmen to increase the Department to 36 sworn officers, along with another dispatcher. Due to conditions, these were put on hold. They have been running with 35 officers instead. Chief Ingvertsen said in 2011 they applied for the “Cops More” grant with the idea of putting in another resource officer at the Middle School and Elementary School. They didn’t get granted the first time, but additional funds were allotted this year to apply for. This year will only pay for 75% and the Town has to pay the 25% and the person has to be a veteran of this war. Ms. Glassman said the Board has to decide if the Town wants to pay the 25%. There will be more information at the next Board meeting.

Chief Ingvertsen spoke about the Civil Preparedness Budget and Emergency Management with storms. He said they are asking for a large request for funds. The public felt that more communication is needed to the public during the storms. They are asking for \$15,000 for a radio express advisory system. The Fire Department will pay \$24,000 and the Town would have to pick up \$24,000, which is not in the budget. They are trying the system out first and then will get public feedback. They did purchase an Everbridge system so public phone numbers are listed and they could contact them if still under storm threat and they should stay where they are. They are looking for LED signs so messages can be posted (they have one at the Fire House and one at the Police Dept). Ms. Glassman said this request is under the CNR account. Chief Ingvertsen said the Social Services Department is also handling magnets and booklets to be handed out giving vital information on them so they are handy to residents.

Chief Ingvertsen said the generator in the back of the building needs to be shut down after three days of use to do maintenance. It can’t run for ten or more days without causing problems. They are trying to get a back-up generator that is movable, which is also in the Capital Budget. They are also exploring the feasibility of purchasing another portable generator or permanent one for the Tariffville section. They are also looking into purchasing portable bathrooms and showers.

Chief Ingvertsen said they are looking for a new dispatch radio system console, as their system is now over 13 years old and parts are getting harder to find and “patching” will become an issue.

The new system is computerized, smaller, and much more efficient and costs about \$185,000.

Chief Ingvertsen said the “truck wash” is very important not only for the Town trucks, but will also help with keeping upkeep in the police cars for longer use.

General Government, including Insurance and Pension

Ms. Harris spoke about Tab 9. She said there was an estimated 8% increase in general liability, an 8% increase in Workman's Comp and an 8% increase in property and casualty.

Ms. Harris said there were higher claims due to two severe events, the barn burning and a police officer injury, etc. She said CIRMA will do premium adjustments which will go back into the general fund.

Ms. Harris said there is a 5% health insurance increase. She said social security was adjusted to \$660,000 for 2013.

Ms. Harris went to Tab 14 and the Simsbury Golf Course budget. She said she put \$9,330 in the Simsbury Golf Course Budget for their seasonal help. Ms. Glassman said a new risk management position was made. She is trying to make the Department Heads more accountable and responsible for their departments.

Ms. Harris said the pension went down due to a better investment rate of return on the plans. She noted that there is a Pension meeting at 7 am tomorrow, and she is comfortable with the figures.

Ms. O'Connor, Tax Collector, spoke about Tab 4. Ms. Harris noted that Ms. O'Connor was certified this year.

Ms. Harris said there was an increase in bank fees because they are using a new company now so residents can pay with credit cards and will then go to paperless billing. The fees are passed on to the residents.

Ms. Harris said the Fire District taxes and Sewer Use taxes are paid by the resident users.

Ms. Keily, Town Clerk spoke about Tab 2. She said there was a slight increase in her budget. She showed the Board an old book, dated 1924-29, that is need of repair and refurbishing. There is a company who will refurbish pages, or make copies and put them into a new loose leaf binder. There are about 25-30 books that are in need of repair/refurbishing and they each cost from \$750 - \$1200 to do.

Ms. Keily said she is also concerned about the space for more books, etc. in the vault. She said there are now four towns that have their probate courts here and they use the vault also. Ms. Keily then invited the Board into the vault to see exactly what is in there. She explained where all the information was and the Board was fascinated.

Ms. Keiley said there is a surcharge on the land records, which is under "other funding source". They have a special fund, as they keep \$1 from the land records surcharge fee. She'd love to have the money added back for the repair/refurbishing of the books

as it has been on the wish list for a few years now. Mr. Askham agreed with putting this back on the wish list.

Ms. Glassman said the Personnel Sub-Committee recommended a reduction in the Administrative account for Sean Kimball changes. There are increases in the Community Services budget due to the Memorial Day Parade, CCM data service, CRCOG, North Central Conservation District, Hartford Transit District, Farmington Valley Student Union, SCTV, Farmington River Watershed, North Central Regional Men's Health Board and Council of Small Towns. The Solid Waste Authority was now put under the Landfill Account.

Ms. Harris said Journey Home requested funding. They made a presentation to the Board last year. The Board was very supportive last year, but Ms. Glassman is on their Board, and feels she could possibly have a conflict of interest and turned the meeting over to Mr. Hampton. Ms. Harris said Journey Home regards homelessness and the houses surveyed where the last residence was Simsbury. They are a volunteer based program. They are asking for \$3800 for the next three years.

After discussion, this item will be referred to Social Services and Aging & Disability for further review and input. Ms. Glassman returned to the meeting.

Ms. Harris went through the General Administrative budget. The First Selectmen's fiscal budget from 2012 to 2013 went down. Travel also went into the General Administrative service budget. There were just some line item changes for better tracking and control.

Ms. Glassman said the Regional Probate Court budget was less as the Town is paying the cost of utilities and overhead as part of the general budget. We are now the host community for the Courts.

Ms. Harris said the Financial Services is under staffed by one person and their budget stayed the same. The Assessor's office wants another person for staffing purposes, but it wasn't added in this year, although there is a need.

Ms. Harris said Data Processing asked for a full time data technician, but will recommend money for part-time. Staff will work with Mr. Bazzano and staff because of their increased staffing need for updating information, especially during emergencies. This will be revisited in the future. The GIS system cost needs to be shared with the Board of Education if they are interested in using it.

Capital Non-Recurring

Ms. Harris went to Tab 16, and she read State Statute Section 7-361 on how budgets are handled. The Town also has a policy for CNR. In some instances items do re-occur. She said the budget request was received by the Board. This included a rank of

priority. The lists included a total of the general government side is \$466,620, which doesn't include Simsbury Farms or the vault upgrade. Ms. Harris said this would be an operating transfer. There will need to be reductions in the priority list.

Ms. Glassman noted that the Board can't cut paving management or transportation improvements without losing the STEEP grant, which would be short-sighted. The Board could cut the tobacco shed preservation, and then it would cost about \$5,000 to tear the shed down.

There was more discussion on what items could be moved back and items that have already been moved back before or are very important for this budget.

Capital Improvement Plan

Ms. Glassman said she had asked Rich Sawitzke to prioritize the Capital Improvement requests, which he did, so it can be forwarded to the Board of Finance. She didn't think the Ethel Walker Phase II project could be moved as there is a grant for \$691,000, and she doesn't want to lose that.

After discussion, the 2012-13 Capital Improvement Plan priority list is now: Dispatch Radio Console Replacement; District Network Infrastructure; Owens Brook/West Street/Greenway improvement; DPW vehicle wash; High School RE-circuit, EOC/Dispatch Re-circuit & standby generator, Tariffville Emergency Shelter Study; Henry James Fire Suppression & Phase II DD; Town Offices HVAC Control Update; Tariffville Connection Greenway - Phase I; and Town offices Upgrade.

Ms. Glassman said the Board would tell the Board of Finance what they need and then the Board of Finance states what they will fund. They will let the Board decide how to bond the monies. They will have to work together to make sure the budget and funding is best for the Town. There are also more grants to look in to help fund projects. Ms. Harris spoke gave the Board information on Bond Anticipation Notes. She said there is a meeting with the Board of Finance tomorrow. The AAA Town rating is based on how the Town handles its assets.

Ms. Heavner made motion to forward the 2012-13 CIP priority list to the Board of Finance, moving Owens Brook before the truck wash. Mr. Hampton seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ADJOURN

Mr. Hampton made motion to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Ms. Haase seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary A. Glassman, First Selectman